

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT OF APPEALS**  
**CITATION GUIDANCE MEMORANDUM**

[Revised August 2007]

1. Whenever something in this memorandum conflicts with any provision of “A Uniform System of Citation” (commonly known as the Bluebook), *this memorandum controls*; otherwise, follow the Bluebook. Citations to the Bluebook in this memorandum refer to the eighteenth edition, published in 2005.

2. Italicize all names of cases, including “v.”, in both text and footnotes.

3. Cite all cases from this court and its predecessor, the Municipal Court of Appeals, as follows:

*Doe v. Roe*, 508 A.2d 1234 (D.C. 1985).

4. Cite the District of Columbia Code as follows:

D.C. Code § 11-721 (2001).

D.C. Code § 2-301.04 (2007 Supp.)

If the code provision has been renumbered between the 1981 and

2001 editions cite both provisions the first time, as follows, and then cite only to the 2001 edition:

D.C. Code § 2-510 (a) (2001) *formerly*

D.C. Code § 1-1510 (a) (1981).

5. In string citations for a single proposition, cite this court's decisions ahead of those from the D.C. Circuit or the U.S. District Court for D.C., irrespective of the year decided. For example:

*Smith v. Jones*, 342 A.2d 987 (D.C. 1975); *Brown v. Green*,  
199 U.S. App. D.C. 456, 598 F.3d 321 (2000).

6. Do not capitalize the word “government” when referring to the United States or the District of Columbia as a party.

7. When citing slip opinions which appear on the D.C. Courts' website:

(a) Give our court's number and the date of  
decision. For example: *Doe v. Roe*, No.  
85-1876 (D.C. July 31, 2007).

(b) When referring to a specific page of a slip opinion, cite: *Doe v. Roe*, No. 85-1876, slip op. at 4 (D.C. July 31, 2007).

(c) Cite D.C. Circuit slip opinions as follows: *United States v. Jones*, No. 85-6789 (D.C. Cir. Aug. 2, 2007).

8. If a D.C. Circuit case is reported in U.S. App. D.C. always give that citation in addition to F.2d or F.3d. If the case is reported in F.3d but not yet in U.S. App. D.C., cite as follows: *United States v. Jones*, \_\_ U.S. App. D.C. \_\_, 718 F.3d 543 (2000).

9. When two or more single letters are used in an abbreviation, there should be no space between them. For this purpose an ordinal number such as 2d, 3d, 4th is treated as a single letter. For example: U.S., D.C., A.2d, F.2d, S.D.N.Y., A.L.R.3d

However, when an abbreviation contains more than one letter, it should be preceded and followed by a space. For example:

U.S. App. D.C., Cal. App. 2d, Ill. 2d, So. 2d  
N.D. W. Va., U. Pa. L. Rev., A.L.R. Fed.

10. When a case is cited for the first time in an opinion (text or footnote), give its complete citation. If it is cited again after that point, use “*supra*” if the original citation was in the text, or “*supra* note \_” if the original citation was in a footnote. (This is specifically contrary to the Bluebook.) To refer to a specific page in the cited case when using the *supra* form, cite as follows:

*Smith v. Jones, supra*, 342 A.2d at 991.

- OR -

*Smith, supra*, 342 A.2d at 991.

*Smith v. Jones, supra* note 6, 342 A.2d at 991.

*Doe v. Roe, supra*, slip op. at 4.

However, if you are not referring to a specific page, and if the case you are citing for the second time was originally cited so far back in the opinion that the original citation may be difficult to find, you may wish to give the full citation again for the convenience of the reader.

If the context is clear, both the case name and the *supra* may be omitted. For example:

We rejected the identical argument in the *Smith* case, characterizing it as “silly and absurd.” 342 A.2d at

991.

11. Opinions by Superior Court judges should be cited to the Daily Washington Law Reporter, if possible, giving the date of the opinion (not the date of publication):

*Blue v. Gray*, 112 Daily Wash. L. Rptr. 2345 (D.C. Super. Ct. June 21, 1985).

If the opinion is not published, cite it like any other unpublished opinion:

*Blue v. Gray*, No. 81-765 (D.C. Super. Ct. June 21, 1985).

12. “*In the Matter of*”, “*Matter of*”, and “*Petition of*” “*Estate of*”, should always be abbreviated “*In re*”.

13. When quoted material is set off by being indented in an opinion, do not use quotation marks. The source of the quotation should not be enclosed in brackets, nor should it be indented. Instead, it should appear at the left margin on the line immediately following the quotation. For an illustration see page 23 of the Bluebook.

14. In case headings prior to the actual text of an opinion:

(a) Italicize the titles of the judges:

Before HOLMES, BRANDEIS, and CARDOZO,  
*Associate Judges.*

or

Before STONE, *Chief Judge*, and BLACK and  
HARLAN, *Associate Judges.*

(b) Be careful to indicate whether the case was “Argued”  
or “Submitted” on the date stated.

(c) If there is only one attorney for a party and that attorney  
is retained, not appointed, do not use a comma;

*John Doe* for appellee.

(d) If counsel has been appointed by this court, set that fact  
off by commas rather than parentheses.

(e) If more than one attorney’s name appears on the brief,  
but only one attorney presented oral argument, state:

*John Doe*, with whom *Richard Roe* was on  
the brief, for appellee.

For purposes of this rule, a brief and a reply brief filed by the same party are considered a single brief. Do not say “on the briefs”.

(f) If the docket indicates that an attorney entered an appearance, but that attorney was not on the brief and did not argue, state:

*John Doe* also entered an appearance for appellee.

(g) If a party has been represented by a law student, state:

*John Doe*, law student, for appellant.

(h) For opinion purposes use the term “en banc” (not italicized), even though a statute or rule may say “in banc.”

(i) If a case has multiple appellants and only one appellee, or one appellant and multiple appellees, consider writing the caption as follows:

JOHN DOE (No. 85-621),  
RICHARD ROE (No. 85-638),  
PETER POE (No. 85-654),  
and  
MICHAEL MOE (No. 85-655), Appellants,

v.

UNITED STATES, Appellee.

15. Cite our court's rules as: D.C. App. R. 26 (c). Leave spaces as indicated.

16. Cite the Superior Court's various sets of rules as follows:

Civil: Super. Ct. Civ. R. 4.  
Criminal: Super. Ct. Crim. R. 4.  
Family Court: D.C. Fam. Ct. R. 4  
Small Claims: Super. Ct. Sm. Cl. R. 4.  
Landlord and Tenant: Super. Ct. L&T R. 4.  
Domestic Relations: Super. Ct. Dom. Rel. R. 4.  
Intra-Family: Super. Ct. Intra-Fam. R. 4.  
Juvenile: Super. Ct. Juv. R. 4.  
Mental Health: Super. Ct. Ment. H. R. 4.  
Mental Retardation: Super. Ct. Ment. Ret. R. 4.  
Neglect: Super. Ct. Neg. R. 4.  
Probate: Super. Ct. Prob. R. 4.  
Tax: Super. Ct. Tax R. 4.

17. Since "R." in citations refers to either "Rule" or "Rules," it should be used in citing multiple rules as well as single ones. For example: D.C. App. R. 26 (c), 31 (a)(5).



18. The following special citation forms should be used:

American Bar Association Standards for Criminal Justice:

ABA Standards for Criminal Justice, *The  
Defense Function* § \_\_ (2d ed. 1980)

Daily Washington Law Reporter:

\_\_ Daily Wash. L. Rptr. \_\_ (date)

District of Columbia Register:

\_\_ D.C. Reg. \_\_ (year)

District of Columbia Municipal Regulations:

\_\_ DCMR § \_\_ (year)

District of Columbia Rules and Regulations:

\_\_ DCRR § \_\_ (year)

Standardized Civil Jury Instructions:

Standardized Civil Jury Instructions for the  
District of Columbia, No. \_\_ (1981)

Standardized Criminal Jury Instructions (the “red book”):

Criminal Jury Instructions for the District  
of Columbia, No. \_\_ (4<sup>th</sup> ed. 1993)

The District of Columbia Administrative Procedure Act, after its full name has been given once, should be abbreviated “DCAPA”, without periods or spaces.

19. Be particularly careful to know the Supreme Court status of our cases. The grant or denial of a petition for a writ of certiorari should always be reflected in the citation. Since denials of certiorari take several months to get into Shepard’s Citations, each judge’s chambers should maintain its own internal record-keeping system for Supreme Court actions in our cases. LEXIS and/or Westlaw can also be useful.

20. A denial of rehearing by any court, including the Supreme Court, should not be reflected in the citation unless it is accompanied by an opinion, or unless the denial is relevant to the point for which the case is cited.

21. When you are citing a case in which certiorari has been denied and wish to add something parenthetically about the case, the parenthetical comment should precede the “*cert. denied*”. For example:

*Doe v. Roe*, 508 A.2d 1234 (D.C. 1985) (plaintiff held liable), *cert. denied*, 462 U.S. 987 (1983).

22. For guidance on the use of “*sub nom.*” see pages 94-95 of the Bluebook. Note that “*sub nom.*” is not used when the reference is merely to the denial of certiorari.

23. The word “see” should be italicized *only* when it is used as an introductory signal to a citation. A reference to another part of the opinion you are writing is not a citation but a direction to the reader; in that situation, therefore, “see” is not italicized. For example:

*See Doe v. Roe, supra.*

See page 4, *supra*.

24. When citing a footnote in a case or other authority, use “n.” *See* Bluebook, p.60. When referring to a footnote in the opinion you are writing, however, use “note”.

*See Doe v. Roe, supra*, 508 A.2d at 1237 n.4.

See note 4, *supra*.

25. Always put a comma after *accord* and *contra*. (This is contrary

to the current Bluebook, but consistent with earlier editions of the Bluebook. It makes more sense when case names are italicized, as they are in our opinions.)

26. Never put a comma after *see* and *cf.* except when they are followed by *e.g.*

27. In citing statutes by section and subsection numbers, leave a space between “§” and the section number, and between the section number and the subsection letter enclosed in parentheses. There should also be a space before the date, which is likewise in parentheses:

D.C. Code § 17-305 (a) (2001).

However, do not leave a space between subsection letters and the designation of smaller subdivisions, such as paragraphs or subparagraphs:

D.C. Code § 11-721 (a)(2)(A) (2001).

28. Any number that begins a sentence must always be spelled out. Otherwise, numbers from 100 up to infinity should generally be given in numerals. Numbers from zero to ninety-nine should generally be spelled out in both text and footnotes, except those numbers containing decimal

points, dollar amounts, and citations to statutes or rules should always be given in numerals. When a series includes one or more numerals, numerals should be used throughout. Percentages less than 100 may be given either in words or in numerals, so long as you are consistent, except that percentages containing decimal points must be given in numerals. For example:

He was sentenced to a prison term of eight to twenty-four years.

The search yielded six rounds of ammunition and \$2.74 in change.

The packets contained 24, 112, and 66 milligrams of heroin, respectively.

He was disqualified under section 10 of the statute.

Ivory Soap is 99.44 percent pure.